

Practical Medicine Series, 1913. Vol. VI. General Medicine. Edited by Frank Billings, M. S., M. D., and J. H. Salisbury, A. M., M. D.

The review opens with a very good synopsis of Vaccine Therapy. Blood cultures in fevers of obscure origin are advocated. In typhoid, the prophylactic injections are not mentioned. The emetine treatment of amoebic dysentery is one of the newer things described.

The application of radiography in the diagnosis of diseases of the gastro-intestinal tract is well discussed and illustrated, though the conclusions seem rather more definite than those in the latest literature on this subject.

The chapter on gastric and duodenal ulcer is very complete and quite moderate in the conclusions arrived at.

In considering constipation the reviewers announce their disapproval of the Lane operation and give reasons therefor.

Though the ground covered in this volume has been confined to the acute infections and diseases of the gastro-intestinal tract, liver, pancreas and spleen, there is a great mass of interesting material presented in a very clear and moderate way.

G. H. T.

Essentials of Prescription Writing. By Cary Eggleston, M. D., Instructor in Pharmacology, Cornell University Medical College, New York City. 32mo. of 115 pages. W. B. Saunders Company, 1913. Cloth, \$1.00 net. W. B. Saunders Company, Philadelphia, London.

A small duodecimo of a little more than a 100 pages gives the "Essentials of Prescription Writing," concisely and in a very few words. In fact, the writer questions whether a few extra words, and a few more sentences, would not have made the work a little more impressive and a little more interesting. More attention than usual has been paid to the Metric System, and its application. A good and full explanation of the so-called "Standard" prescription and the ease with which it can be applied in converting the average apothecaries' prescription to a metric one is commendable and may be one of the means of making the metric more popular. The chapters on Vehicles, Incompatibilities, Doses, etc., follow only too concisely the usual writings on these subdivisions. All in all it carries out its object—it "Provides the student of medicine with a succinct treatment of the subject of prescription writing." A. L. L.

Syphilis and the Nervous System. By Max Nonne. Translated by Ball. Published by Lippincott, Philadelphia, 1913.

The English translation of Ball should bring this valuable second edition into wide use in this country.

More light could have been thrown on the subject of basilar meningitis and its symptomatology in view of much recent work.

In the discussion of polyuria and polydipsia on page 97, of glycosuria and polyuria on page 151 and of diabetes insipidus on page 153 as symptoms of basilar meningitis no explanation for their occurrence of significance is attempted.

For the most part these are all expressions of hypophyseal involvement and may be caused as well by any other lesion as by lues. If the basilar syphilis affects the interpeduncular as is common, the result is the same as if some other growth occurs there.

The chapters on the reactions and on therapy give one a sound working basis which comes with

a sense of relief after the numerous current articles which too often make exaggerated and positive statements based on a few unusual coincidents.

H. C. Naffziger.

A Clinic Manual of Mental Diseases. By Francis X. Dercum. W. B. Saunders Co., 1913.

This work of 425 pages deals essentially with the clinical aspect of mental disease and presents in concise form the views of the well-known Philadelphia neurologist and psychiatrist. There is something refreshingly personal in the author's presentation of his subject, and this, together with a rather unusual classification, gives the work a distinctive character. For the practising physician Dercum believes that the understanding of mental disease will be made more easy by the aid of internal medicine than by psychologic interpretation, and following this opinion prominence is given in Part III of the work to a chapter on "The Clinical Forms of Mental Disease Related to the Somatic Affections" and a second chapter on "Mental Disease Related to Age." For the group of mental states commonly designated as Psychasthenias Dercum proposes the term "Neurasthenic-Neuropathic Insanities," intending to convey by this expression the condition as he sees it: neuropathy plus nervous exhaustion. The Freudian sexual theory is discussed at some length but does not meet with the approval of the author, although the importance of buried symptoms complexes in the etiology of abnormal mental states is admitted. The final chapter takes up the question of treatment, extra mural as well as intra mural treatment being considered. Prophylactic treatment in children suffering from neuropathic heredity is considered of prime importance. The need of a psychopathic hospital for acute cases in every large city is emphasized.

W. F. S.

Surgery of the Eye. A Hand-book for Students and Practitioners. By Ervin Török, M. D., Surgeon to the New York Ophthalmic and Aural Institute; Ophthalmic Surgeon to Beth Israel Hospital; Consulting Ophthalmologist to the Tarrytown Hospital, and Gerald H. Grout, M. D., Assistant Surgeon to the New York Ophthalmic and Aural Institute; Instructor in the Eye Department, Vanderbilt Clinic; Consulting Ophthalmologist to the Bellevue Hospital, First Division. Octavo, 507 pages, with 509 original illustrations, 101 in colors, and 2 colored plates. Cloth, \$4.50, net. Lea & Febiger, Publishers, Philadelphia and New York, 1913.

After looking through this handy volume, one feels inclined to agree on the whole with Dr. Arnold Knapp's impression—given in a one-page introduction to the work—that the arrangement of the subject matter is simple and practical and the text clear and brief. Of the wealth of illustrations, the clear and numerous cuts of instruments distributed freely throughout the text would seem to be an especially serviceable arrangement for the beginner. We cannot grant the same commendation, however, to many of the liberally given illustrations of the operative procedures, especially amongst the photographs. In far too many of the latter, purporting to give details of technic, the main raison d'être of the illustration, the bulbus itself, is so indistinct and small as to be absolutely without any real meaning to the reader not already familiar with the procedure. Instead of packing the volume with such photographs, purporting to aid the student, it would seem to us that a future edition of the book, as an elementary treatise, would gain decidedly by the use of prominent

type in emphasizing certain phases of the operation and especially in calling attention to the fatal risk so largely lurking in capital operations of the bulbous. The numerous good and instructive diagrammatic illustrations are a distinctive feature of the book. Size and get up deserve nothing but praise; especially commendable in an ophthalmological work is the large and clear type. N.

Erinnerungen und Betrachtungen. Prof. Dr. Heinrich Fritsch. A. Marcus & Co., Weber's Verlag, Bonn, 1913.

The book contains the reminiscences and observations of the well-known veteran German Gynecologist, Heinrich Fritsch, who participated in the Franco-Prussian war of 1870-71 in the capacity of volunteer surgeon, and as such witnessed many engagements of the contesting armies.

We are accustomed to look upon Germany as one of the most progressive countries and as one of the foremost exponents of medicine as a science and art. But while the organization and preparation of the Prussian fighting forces were admirable, we are told by Fritsch that the sanitary measures of the army were, in the beginning of the war, obsolete and totally inefficient. The soldiers' food was qualitatively and quantitatively poor and provisions for good drinking-water were inadequate. Thus the German soldier was, especially at the onset of the cold season, exposed to untold misery. Scant or no provision was made for the care of the wounded after decisive battles. As proof of this Fritsch graphically relates how he was, after the sanguinary battle of Gravelotte, left alone at night in a forest with a large number of wounded soldiers, without water or any means of transportation. Finally he succeeded in having a large number of the gravest cases removed on most rudimentarily improvised stretchers. One of the men, carried in this fashion through the dark forest, died on the road. Before reaching the field-hospital the cortege was in danger of losing more men by being fired upon from their own outposts.

The German army-surgeon, who is still looked upon as a negligible quantity by the commissioned officer, had constantly to advance to the firing line during battles and work amid flying bullets. Probably less dangerous, but certainly more arduous, were his duties in the field-hospital. Surgery was still in its preantiseptic or rather preaseptic era and the majority of soldiers, therefore, were hopelessly sick from blood-poison. One chill was followed by another and uncontrollable hemorrhages precipitated the invariably fatal outcome. Physicians were scarce and those in authority, in many instances, incapable or too old. Fritsch himself who had resigned his assistantship in a gynecological clinic to join the army, keenly felt his lack of surgical training. Left to his own resources and almost alone in charge of a large hospital of over 200 beds, into which regularly over night 20 to 30 new cases were "dumped," which in most instances died without an attempt at a diagnosis, he was often overwhelmed by the weight of his responsibility and at times unhappy and inconsolable on account of his poor therapeutic results. For all the misery caused by chills, blood-poison, hemorrhages, etc., he had, as he puts it, nothing more to offer than the morphin-syringe and his tears.

Fritsch rides through the enemy's country with open eyes, and, while performing his duties with zeal and self-sacrifice, he finds time and opportunity for his observations on the beautiful natural scenery of southeastern France, on camp-life and on many interesting episodes of the great struggle; he gives fascinating descriptions of battles, reliable contributions upon our knowledge of France and

her inhabitants and discusses here and there many questions of medical import. Everywhere the author's good judgment and sound criticism are apparent in the book, the perusal of which will prove to old and young physicians alike, profitable and delightful. M. K.

The Protein Split Products in Relation to Immunity and Disease. By Victor C. Vaughan, M. D., LL. D., Dean of the Department of Medicine and Surgery of the University of Michigan, Victor C. Vaughan, Jr., M. D., A. B., in charge of the Tuberculosis Work of the Detroit Board of Health and J. Walter Vaughan, M. D., A. B., junior attending Surgeon to Harper Hospital, Detroit. 12mo, 476 pages, illustrated. Cloth, \$3.00, net. Lea & Febiger, Publishers, Philadelphia and New York, 1913.

A majority of the popular medical writings of a decade add but a trifle to the common store of knowledge, and, as a rule, they do little more than reveal what was already sufficiently obvious. This is to be practical. It is a way the age has, apparently, of compounding with its natural limitations. Fortunately, from time to time a book appears which is in vigorous contrast to the uniform monotony of its contemporaries, and, because it gives a more intimate and distinct view of nature, it irresistibly impels thought into new fields. The verdict of time probably will award this merit to Vaughan's work on the protein poison. At any rate, it may be doubted whether, in recent years, an equally solid and scholarly contribution to medical science has appeared. It is a credit in every way to American research.

single sentence in the highly significant preface: "The cell is not the unit of life; life is molecular." As one may correctly infer from this, the mode of treatment throughout is essentially chemical. And it is of the highest quality. The principal argument is based upon an impressive body of experimental data, the results of fifteen years' work, and a prodigious amount of labor has been expended in the pertinent literature. This is a combination, admittedly, which entitles one to write with the seal of authority. The authors have, however, in no instance exceeded in statement what was well justified by ascertained fact. The reasoning, of necessity, is close, but it is also perfectly intelligible. And that is saying a great deal, when it is considered that the problem of anaphylaxis, which, hitherto, has been "invested with all the sublimity that obscurity can bestow," is analyzed with ability of a high order. They plead for a greatly simplified conception of the mechanism of immunity.

In great part their data were derived from bulk analyses of various bacteria. It was not unusual, for example, to employ 500 grams of dried tubercle bacilli at a single experiment. These huge masses of bacteria, or "particulate proteins," as they are designated, they hydrolyzed, and afterwards studied the biological peculiarities of the cleavage products. Owing to its wide scope, it is not possible to discuss the work in detail; one or two facts must suffice. They were unable to detect cellulose. This of itself is surprising. But in all protein substances examined by them, bacterial or other, from the typhoid bacillus or egg-white, they found a common, central non-specific poison nucleus. This is known as the Vaughan poison. The lethal dose is half a milligram. Undoubtedly, in many biological reactions, this poison is a highly important factor. It is non-diffusible, and, therefore, when released, as it must be, in the peptic cleavage of protein, it usually is innocuous. In the parenteral digestion of a foreign protein, on the contrary, this poison is set free in the tissues where it is potent for harm.